

**THE SYNOD OF VIRGINIA.**

Until a few years ago this Synod was composed of twelve Presbyteries. Now it has only eight. Chesapeake and Maryland were consolidated to form Potomac. Kanawha and Greenbrier were given to aid in forming the Synod of West Virginia. And Abingdon was given to the new Synod of Appalachia.

The Synod of Virginia now has 382 churches, 258 ministers, 1,070 elders, 1,583 deacons and 48,913 members, in Sunday-schools 50,638.

Contributions for the year ending March 31,

Church was organized in 1819, but recently the Stated Clerk of Lexington Presbytery, upon investigating the ancient records found that the Church is thirty years older than it had been thought to be.

On April 15, 1789, the Presbytery took the following action:

"Presbytery having considered the petition of Lexington to be recorded as a distinct Church—presented to our last—and finding that the members of Hall's Church within the ancient limits of which Lexington is situated, do in general agree to this separation from them, Presbytery do record them as such, to be hereafter known by the name of the Church of Lexington."

Hall's church will be recognized as New Monmouth, it being the early name of that congregation. For some reason Lexington Presbyterians forgot the date of the separation of the churches. That has long been fixed at 1819. It is particularly remarkable for the reason that the Presbytery at Hall's church in the spring of 1789, adjourned to hold the stated meeting at Lexington in October and did so; the records show that eleven meetings of Presbytery were held with the Lexington church before 1819. The meeting in October, 1789, was held in "Rockbridge courthouse," where the congregation originally evidently worshipped. Eight years later they bought a site at the head of town, now the cemetery site, and built their first church. This church has been regarded

houses and was in the limits of Monmouth. There is no record of the first minister of Hall's Meeting House. We reach the ground of authentic history when in 1776 Rev. Wm. Graham became pastor of Timber Ridge and Hall's Meeting House, and continued as such until 1780, and in 1789 he accepted a call to Monmouth, which continued until 1796, and in 1798 he gave one-fourth of his time to the Lexington congregation at a salary of 22 pounds and 18 shillings. In 1799 Dr. Baxter was called to Monmouth and preached alternately at Monmouth and Lexington for twenty years and in October, 1819, the Lexington church, as distinct from Monmouth, consisted of ninety-four members. After this Dr. Baxter preached every Sabbath in Lexington.

The first meetings of the Lexington congregation were held in a grove near the Davidson property, on the east end of Washinton street. A tent was afterwards erected and this, with the courthouse, became the place of meeting for several years. The Presbyterians erected the first church edifice in Lexington in 1797. It was a brick building, located near the Main street entrance to the present cemetery. This building was enlarged in 1819. In 1843 it was decided to build a new church more centrally located on a lot purchased by the Female Working Society of the Presbyterian Church of Lexington. The new church was completed and occupied in 1845 and the wings were added in 1859.

The first board of deacons was elected in 1855, consisting of Major T. J. Jackson, A. L. Nelson and J. W. Barclay.

In 1899 the church was enlarged and improved and refurnished at considerable cost.

Since 1789 the Lexington church has been a distinct organization. For 110 years the public worship of God has been constantly observed. Five times in these 110 years of Christian endeavor this congregation has been called upon to provide more enlarged facilities for Christian service.

During its existence it has had the service of ten pastors and four stated supplies. It has had forty-three ruling elders and thirty-one deacons.



Rev. F. T. McFaden, D. D., Acting Moderator

1916, were as follows: Foreign Missions, \$90,971; Assembly's Home Missions, \$20,438; Synod's Home Missions, \$17,148; Presbytery's Home Missions, \$31,687; Congregational Home Missions, \$20,762; Christian Education and Ministerial Relief, \$17,915; Sunday-School Extension, \$6,401; Schools and Colleges, \$13,792; Bible Cause, \$1,715; Orphans' Home, \$11,466; Miscellaneous Benevolences, \$15,145; Pastors' Salaries, \$198,526; Congregational Expenses, \$267,321. Total Benevolent Contributions, \$427,440. Total Congregational Expenses, \$465,847. Grand Total, \$713,287.

As each of the 258 ministers is a member of the Synod and is expected to attend and as each of the 382 churches is expected to send an elder, the possible attendance is 640. Past experience has shown that the attendance will not be anything like as large as that. The largest attendance at any meeting, before the loss of the three Presbyteries to other Synods, was never more than 350, and very rarely was the attendance anything like as large as that.

The Moderator of the preceding sessions of Synod is expected to preside at the beginning of the meeting and preach the opening sermon. In this case the Moderator is Rev. James R. Graham, who has returned to his mission work in China. The last Moderator preceding him, who is Rev. Dr. F. T. McFaden, of Richmond, will preside. At his request Rev. Dr. W. W. Moore will preach the opening sermon.

Rev. Dr. James P. Smith has been the Stated Clerk of the Synod for 47 years and has never missed a single meeting in more than 50 years.

**LEXINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.**

For many years it was supposed that this

as having been for more than twenty years simply as an outpost of New Monmouth. In fact it was a separate organization.

At Presbytery held here in 1789 four preachers and two elders made up the body. Rev. Archibald Scott, pastor of Hebron church, was moderator. He was the great grandfather of Rev. William N. Scott, D. D., of Staunton, a member of the Presbytery now in session.

The foundation of the Lexington Presbyterian church was laid in the erection of Hall's meeting house, or Forks of James river, which was built in 1745, and on the motion of Richard Woods and others was licensed as a place of worship August 22, 1752, as appears from an entry of that date in the Law Order Book of the Augusta County Court Clerk's office (No. 2, p. 320). The lot upon which it was erected was deeded by Benjamin Borden in 1754. Hall's Meeting House was known in the closing years of the 18th century as Monmouth.

Old Monmouth comprised, at the time of the building of the Stone church, about half of the area of Rockbridge county. Lexington in 1780 consisted of four



Rev. W. W. Moore, D. D., Who Preaches the Opening Sermon.